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Burke, James Francis

Perplexing problems of the World's Peace Conference

Pittsburgh

[1919]

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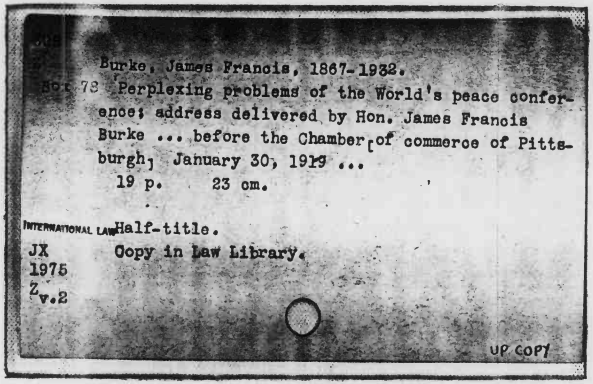
Burke, James Francis, 1867-1932.
Perplexing problems of the World's peace conference; address delivered by Hon. James Francis Burke ... before the Chamber of commerce of Pittsburgh, January 30, 1919 ...
19 p. 23 cm.
Half-title.
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TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35 mm REDUCTION RATIO: 11:1 IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA (IIA) IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 3-3-97 INITIALS: RB

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PERPLEXING PROBLEMS
OF THE
WORLD'S PEACE CONFERENCE

ADDRESS

Delivered by

HON. JAMES FRANCIS BURKE
General Counsel
Chamber of Commerce of Pittsburgh
Before the Chamber January 30, 1919.

An Impartial Review of the Questions Confronting the Greatest Conference in the World's History

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20 April 1920 Sun

Perplexing Problems of the Peace Conference

Being introduced by President George S. Oliver, Mr. Burke said:

No military conflict in history ever attracted wider attention or aroused a keener interest in its developments than the great battle for final peace now in progress in Versailles. The guns of yesterday are silent, the charges of troops halted and the strategy of military geniuses in abeyance, while, through the maze of imposing formalities and impressive courtesies, the most skillful diplomats of the age manuever for power and points of vantage in a conference called to perfect treaties and perpetuate the Peace of the World.

Broadly speaking, the task before the conference is not only to transform the present temporary peace into permanent form, but to obliterate as far as human ingenuity can do so, all those racial, geographical, political and economic sore spots whose existence in the past have at intermittent periods thrown the politic body into violent convulsions.

There are those who believe that the proposed soothing process of arbitration which its advocates have in mind, will prove comparatively easy of application and entirely effective in preventing future wars, while others regard it as a fantastic vision entitled only to a place in the cloud land of dreams and idealities.

Popular interest centers in the discussion of the proposed League of Nations, and the most pronounced diversity of opinion exists regarding the practicability of creating an international or supernational body, which will possess not only the legal authority but the necessary armed force to compel nations to yield to its decrees, when the peaceful process of arbitration fails.

THE WORLD'S CONFERENCE

Peace Conferences, and a study of the temporary or enduring character of their results, offer a wide and fascinating field for intellectual diversion. While good has come from many of them, no conference has ever been held that successfully guaranteed or was followed by a permanent peace.

Whether Versailles is to mark the birth of a new era of never ending International harmony is a question for whose reply I had

rather depend upon the historian of tomorrow than trust the prophet of today.

Most of us fervently pray that it may succeed. Every believer in Christ's gospel of "peace on earth and good will toward man" sincerely hopes for its realization, but no student of history or annalist of the ever present elements of human selfishness and national ambitions will discount the dangers of discord in the days to come.

The word "Peace Conference" is a misnomer when applied to all the treaty making bodies that have followed the cessation of hostilities. Those who believe that suspicions disappear, that ignoble aspirations cease and that good-will takes the place of all the baser impulses and ambitions of men, the moment peace delegates are chosen, are ignorant of the events of history.

Beginning with the famous league, known as the "Truce of God," which medieval Christendom brought about over 900 years ago to put an end to feudal wars, and which was supported by solemn religious faiths and armed forces, down to the present day, peace conferences have been followed by wars of increasing area, atrocity and destruction as time has passed and as civilization is presumed to have developed.

WESTPHALIA—1648

The great conference that produced the treaty of Westphalia in 1648 came at the end of 30 years of bloodshed; but that the animosities and bitterness of actual warfare survived the hour when arms were stacked is evident from the fact that three full years elapsed before the delegates chosen to negotiate the real terms of peace could even agree upon a place of meeting. Furthermore, when they did, it was at two different places, in two different diplomatic divisions, and 13 years elapsed before that memorable treaty was finally agreed to by all parties in interest.

Inasmuch as religious prejudices inspired the division of European territory in that treaty, it of course rested upon a foundation of sand and lasted about as long as such a compact could be expected to survive.

In that Congress there was not even attempted the creation of a universal League of Nations.

UTRECHT—1713

The treaty of Utrecht was negotiated in 1713, when France, Great Britain, Holland, Prussia, Savoy, Portugal and Spain ended the bitter war over Spanish succession, and placed the Bourbon, Philip, on the throne, the crowns of France and Spain never to be united; gave Newfoundland and Nova Scotia to Great Britain and also gave her Gibraltar and Minorca and conferred upon her the right to ship African slaves to America. While territorial traces of this convention survive to the present day, yet despite all the avowals of friendship that followed it, affecting millions of people of different colors, customs and castes, in Africa, Europe and America, peace soon gave way to war and the rulers and boundaries changed again with the whims of succeeding periods.

PARIS—1763-1898

During the conference at Paris, between France on the one side and Great Britain, Russia, Austria and Prussia on the other, in the winter of 1814, Napoleon, who previously had abdicated at Fontainebleau, hearing of the bitter controversies between the peace delegates, left Elba, landed at Cannes on March 1, and entered Paris on March 20. The troops sent out under Ney to resist him, joined him, and afterwards fell with him at Waterloo. Thus, the convening of that conference was not succeeded by any more international harmony than we have at present under the surface between Prussia and Poland, Greece and Turkey, Italy and Czecho-Slovakia and other conflicting elements in Europe today. In fact, its own discordant deliberations had much to do with bringing about the "Hundred Days War."

At none of the peace conferences of Paris beginning in 1763 and ending in 1898, was a League of Nations evolved. Nor was it even suggested in the conference of 1783 between France, Spain, Great Britain and the United States, when American independence was acknowledged and ratified in treaty form.

VIENNA—1815

The notable Congress of Vienna, convened in September, 1814, in response to Austria's invitation to all her diplomatic visiting list except France, proceeded to arrange and adjust all the powers and principalities disturbed by Napoleon. When it concluded its sessions in June, 1815, it had formed "The Holy Roman Alliance"—said to have been neither Holy, nor Roman—and the first real dream of universal peace, for the moment impressed the world with the prospect of its permanency.

This alliance was formed by the sovereigns of Russia, Austria and Prussia, and afterwards was joined by all European sovereigns, except Rome and England, although some dispute exists as to England's real attitude and relation to it.

It professed to unite all in a Christian brotherhood while in reality it was designed for the sole selfish purpose of perpetuating its own group of dynasties.

And while it was the most pretentious of all the Peace problems of history, its harvest of harmony ended within 15 years, when the French Revolution of 1830 and other local conflicts kindled new flames in Europe.

Nor was this plan a newly devised one any more than is the

"League of Nations," which is being so widely discussed today. In fact, the idea of a League of Nations was originally outlined and published by Abbe St. Pierre in 1713, as a scheme for perpetual peace, and subsequently submitted by the Russian Emperor, Alexander, to Pitt in 1804, and was ultimately crystallized into the "Holy Alliance" of 1815. Incidentally it is interesting and important to recall that it was in opposition to the ambitious schemes underlying this very "Holy Alliance" that President Monroe injected into his famous message of 1823 the admonition which laid the foundation of the Monroe Doctrine and frustrated the imperial designs of Europe on the Western hemisphere during the century that followed.

VERSAILLES

By comparing it with all the great conferences preceding, it will be apparent that the body now in session at Versailles is confronted with problems greater in number, more vital in character and far more reaching in their consequences than any other in the world's history.

Hence, every step in its construction and every chapter in its proceedings is of absorbing interest.

The place of meeting is governed by precedent and propriety. It is on the soil of a victor and at a point agreeable to all of the triumphant powers interested in its outcome.

The supreme allied council, or Steering Committee, consisting of the United States, France, England, Italy and Japan, by which general control over all preliminaries was exercised, developed and acted by common consent and not in pursuance of any fixed inflexible rule of law or precedent.

The apportionment of representation is a matter temporarily within the discretion of the supreme council, but finally within the jurisdiction of the Congress itself.

The right to preside is governed by well defined rules of international courtesy and belongs by right to France, in which the Congress is held. Hence, the election of Clemenceau.

Whether all the delegates shall participate in all the proceedings is within the discretion of the body itself.

In addition to the main delegates there are also secondary, or technical delegates, who may speak when requested to do so, regarding any of the subjects of which they have made a special study, or upon which they are admitted to be recognized authorities.

Whether every nation that enters shall be held responsible for the future enforcement of peace among all the nations who may engage in disputes over alleged violations of conditions agreed to by this conference, is for the conference itself to determine, and the treaty or treaties to specify.

What language is to be the medium of expression in the conference is one question, while that used in the final written instrument is another. One language alone or several may be used during the conference, and the same rule applies to the treaty itself.

When the treaty is between two distinct tongues, the custom is to run it in parallel columns in both languages and to sign in duplicate.

When the treaty includes covenants to be signed, say by the United States, France, China, Japan, Greece, Italy, Germany and Russia, speaking many distinct tongues, they may all sign a single document in French, which is "the language of the Courts," or they may be in as many forms and languages as the signatories may agree upon.

SELECTION OF DELEGATES

The manner of selecting delegates varies in different countries. In the United States it is wholly a Presidential function, and while controversy has waxed warm over the right, as well as the propriety of the President to act directly rather than by delegating the duty to others, there is no doubt whatever but that he has the legal right himself to act as the only delegate, or as one of many delegates, if he deems it proper to do so. There is nothing in the constitution which renders it impossible for the chief executive in this regard to do directly what he may do indirectly.

This does not mean, however, that there cannot be a serious and an honest difference of opinion regarding the wisdom of the President's recent and present course.

Whether the dignity and the influence of the Presidential office will be impaired or enhanced; whether the power and the prestige of the nation itself will be added to or diminished, are questions upon which wise men will differ, and over which partisans will indulge in controversy, whose bitterness too frequently blinds the participants to the virtues of each other's attitude.

Whether the admitted intellectual force of the man himself, and the unquestioned prestige with which the Presidential office endows the individual wherever he may go, renders it imperative that Mr. Wilson, in the capacity of Chief Executive, impress his presence and his views upon the body whose decisions are fraught with such vital consequence to the American people and to the world, or whether in keeping with our loftiest traditions, and in accord with the examples of our Presidents from the days of Washington, it were wiser for him to invoke the use of the brains and experience of some of the great men of our country for the immediate work of the Peace Congress, as all other nations are doing, and reserve to himself, as the final arbiter, the right to ratify or reject whatever agreement may be negotiated, will, no doubt, continue to be a seriously disputed question for many years to come.

A multitude of earnest and well informed people believe that the President cannot afford to deny the American people the full benefit of his superior intellectual attainments on the scene of action when so precious a prize as the permanent peace of the world is at stake. Many others, equally well informed and patriotic, declare that he cannot afford, directly or by implication, to lead the people of the world to believe that among the hundred million Americans there

is no set of men of adequate experience or of sufficient intellectual force and capacity, without his aid and presence, capable of meeting and matching the wits of other nations, and faithfully and competently protecting the interests of this mighty republic in any conference on any subject in any section of the world.

PRESIDENT OR DELEGATE?

Some suggest the fine haired distinction that Mr. Wilson is acting as premier and not as President. If this be true, can the President legally or with propriety divest himself of his office, hang the Presidential hat in the hall of the foreign office or the Trianon and enter a chamber which echoes with the spirit of controversy and take his place as a delegate among the rank and file of the subordinates of other nations?

If he can, what becomes of the Presidential office, and who is our Chief Executive during the interim? This question recently brought from one of the most zealous Senatorial champions of the President the suggestion that he was at Versailles not as President, nor as Premier, but as the Commander-in-Chief of our armies.

Others quickly pointed out the inconsistency of this claim by suggesting that if he is there in a military capacity as our Army's Chief Commander, he denied himself a great opportunity for service by waiting until the guns were stacked and the fighting ceased before he entered France. I believe the suggestion of his ardent champion does the President an injustice.

RIGHT TO RATIFY

When we recall the processes by which treaties are perfected, another serious question involving the President's direct participation presents itself. In England, the delegates are named with full power to act, without reserving the right of Parliamentary rejection or modification, and in other countries the procedure differs from ours, but no treaty can become binding upon the United States, or a part of the supreme law of this Republic, until certain well defined steps are taken.

First, it is attested by the signatories at the conference, thence it goes through the Secretary of State to the President, and by the President it must be submitted to the Senate, not for ratification, but for rejection or approval.

The Senate may pigeonhole it permanently, it may discuss it for any length of time, or it may adopt a resolution approving it without a single word of debate. Then comes the final act of ratification, which belongs to the President, and not to the Senate, as popularly understood.

Can the President at this stage veto a treaty which his plenipotentiaries have negotiated and which he has invited the Senate to approve? He can, and he may do it by affirmative written declaration or by withholding his signature and consigning it to the waste basket.

Here, however, arises another question. If, while the Senate discussed the treaty new conditions arose, or the President changed his mind, could the President veto or withhold his signature as President from a treaty which he personally had negotiated and signed as a delegate, and which he had invited the Senate to approve? No doubt he could, but would not his presence as a delegate and his signature as such prove somewhat embarrassing to say the least? On the other hand, is the probability of such a dilemma arising sufficiently strong to forbid his acting as a delegate in the first instance?

PROBLEMS OF THE CONFERENCE

We come next to the problems of the Conference itself. These are varied in character and many in number.

First—Shall the President's Doctrine of "Open covenants openly made" prevail? If so, what of the new controversies the publication of every bitter expression in debate might engender among the rank and file of people whose patience and poise might not equal that of trained diplomats who learn to give and take in discussion?

Second—The important questions to be settled between the Central powers and the allies, including evacuation, restoration and indemnities. This includes the disposition of Germany's colonies and the political interests of the millions of human beings affected; it also includes the determination of the economic and financial burden to be imposed upon Germany and Austria after they have been stripped of the territory of which each is to be deprived in the readjustment, and also the question as to whether they shall pay in full all the damages their wicked destruction wrought upon nations. If the latter course meant their bankruptcy and ruin and meant defeat of the purpose itself by rendering them incapable of carrying it out, shall they be compelled to pay all they can bear within a period of, say, 50 years, and if so, how shall the indemnities thus paid be divided among those who suffered losses?

Shall they be compelled to repudiate their home debt of billions of dollars held by their own people until all the obligations due all people of other countries are liquidated?

Third—The treatment to be applied to Russia in order to avert the further spread of Bolshevism and anarchy.

Fourth—The settlement of 26 dangerous and irritating territorial disputes in Europe, in addition to those in Asia and Africa.

Fifth—The definition of and an agreement regarding the so-called "Freedom of the Seas."

Sixth—The manner in which the economic barriers between nations shall be removed.

Seventh—The definite formation of a League of Nations with a clear and distinct understanding as to who shall compose it and what its powers and methods of procedure shall be.

Let us deal briefly with these problems in their order.

The first involves number one of the President's fourteen points: —"Open covenants of Peace openly arrived at" and a process by

which "diplomacy shall always proceed openly and in the public view." This would mean not only the end of secret treaties and agreements, but also the end of all secret sessions and discussions attending their negotiation. One school advocates pitiless publication of every expression of every delegate regarding every question affecting all the nations involved, in settling their disputes, on the theory that the light of day will prove a universal antidote for the evils of secret diplomacy.

The other school declares that such a course would add fuel to the flames already kindled; intensify the hatreds and animosities of races, and sow new seeds of discord among those who would not be inclined to display the moderation and exercise the self control of which great intellectual leaders and trained diplomats are capable and to which they are accustomed in settling serious disputes.

Literally, this would mean that the executive sessions of the United States Senate, in which our most delicate and important affairs with foreign nations are discussed, are to be abolished after continuing for 140 years without serious criticism.

Also it would mean that even the President's Cabinet, when it meets to discuss an important treaty with a foreign power, shall throw open the doors and invite the eager ears of foreign diplomats and spies to cable every word of dissension in our own councils across the seas to foreign offices.

But that this expression does not mean what the country first understood it to convey when the President used it in his speech of January 8, 1918, is apparent from his letter to Secretary Lansing on March 12, two months later, in which, in reply to a query regarding the Borah resolution to compel the Senate to conduct all treaty discussions in open session, the President said, "When I pronounced for open diplomacy, I meant not that there should be no private discussions of delicate matters, but that no secret agreement should be entered into and that all international relations, when fixed, should be open, above board and explicit."

Inasmuch as under our form of government it is impossible to have a secret treaty and that no such treaty ever existed in the history of this nation, the President's declaration for publicity after the fact is nothing new—in reality, it is more than 100 years old.

The second series of problems need only be named to reveal their difficulties, and as I have already mentioned them, their repetition is unnecessary.

The importance of the third, involving the treatment of Russia is heightened by the fact that her betrayal, which constitutes one of history's most shameful stories of bribery, bloodshed and national disintegration, is being followed by a reckless disregard for law, which not only imperils Europe, but threatens to fan into flame the smoldering embers of anarchy throughout the world.

The fourth problem includes a number of territorial disputes, several of which so seriously threatened a new outbreak of war that the Peace Congress a few days since was compelled to issue a warning to several of the smaller nations involved.

Let us glance over Mowrer's array of disputes and wonder how and when perpetual peace is going to dawn in Europe:

1. The Aaland Island, now held by Russia, apparently claimed by Sweden.
2. Helgoland, now held by Germany, probably claimed by England.
3. Denmark demands the return of Schleswig from the hands of the Germans.
4. Belgium seems to be preparing to demand from Holland the Province of Limburg, which stretches like a peninsula between Belgium and Germany, forming an awkward barrier.

LUXEMBURG'S ALTERNATIVE

5. Luxemburg will be called upon to decide whether she prefers to be French, Belgian or independent.
6. France desires to neutralize the left bank of the Rhine.
7. France wants to include the Sarre Basin in Lorraine.
8. Italy claims part of the Austrian Tyrol.
9. The Italians and Jugo-Slavs are engaged in bitter controversy over the Dalmatian coast, which both claim; they are intrenching opposite one another where the lines meet north of Fiume.
10. Northern Albania is claimed by the Jugo-Slavs, the Valona region by Italy, and southern Albania by Greece, while the Albanians themselves desire independence.
11. Greece claims all of Thrace, including Constantinople, from Bulgaria and Turkey.
12. Greeks, Serbs and Bulgars all demand favorable frontier rectifications in Macedonia.
13. The Jugo-Slavs seem to claim the strip running from Graz to the Danube east of Vienna, so as to give them a common frontier with the Czecho-Slovaks.

BITTER PROTEST BY HUNGARIANS

14. The Hungarians protest bitterly against the newly declared southeastern frontier of Slovakia.
15. The Poles, Czechs and Germans all claim Silesia.
16. The annexation of the banat of Temesvar has been proclaimed by both the Jugo-Slavs and the Roumanians, while the Hungarians are unwilling to relinquish it.
17. The Roumanians occupying Transylvania are driving out the Hungarians.
18. Roumanians and Ruthenians are fighting over Bukovina.
19. The Bulgarians want a favorable frontier rectification in the Dobroges.
20. Roumanians are occupying Bessarabia, which the Ukrainians also claim.
21. The Poles and Ruthenians are fighting over Eastern Galicia.
22. The Germans and Poles are fighting over Posen.

CLAIMS BY POLAND

23. The Poles claim the valley of the Vistula and Danzig from Prussia.

24. The Poles claim east Prussia.

25. The Poles claim Lithuania, which seems to prefer independence.

26. Bolsheviki are invading the Baltic Provinces, which seem to desire independence.

The fifth problem of the Congress involves a definition and enforcement of the President's declaration for "Freedom of the Seas."

If this means the right of unmolested travel for all law abiding people upon the great highways of the world beyond territorial waters, many assume that the enjoyment of such right was made certain the day the German fleet surrendered, the Prussian mine floater was discovered and the hell born submarine ended its mission of murder.

If it is designed to end England's undisputed sway as mistress of the seas, the present plan of our Navy Department to equal or surpass England's navy in 1925 should set at rest the apprehension of those who are unwilling longer to entrust her with that power.

If it means the dismantling of the navies of England, France and Japan, then too must it mean the end of Navy building in America, and ultimately an unprotected American merchant marine seeking sales for its cargoes in the great markets of the world.

In fact, the list of things it might and might not mean is formidable to repeat, and for this reason the world eagerly awaits its official definition and will welcome its enforcement if it proves just and practical.

The sixth problem involves the removal of all economic barriers between nations.

While the President, who is also the author of this suggestion, has not defined just what idea he intended to convey, many of his friends and political adherents declare that this does not mean as some assert, the tearing down of custom houses and the repeal of all tariff and customs revenues laws. That what the President meant, as he said in his recent notes to the Senate, was that while all nations were to impose whatever customs tariffs they saw fit, they must impose them against all countries alike.

Those who disagree with the President quickly point out that this would forbid the United States maintaining a reciprocity agreement with Cuba, which has proven so beneficial to both; that it would be an insurmountable barrier against our building up trade through reciprocity treaties with South America; that it would compel us to allow Germany and China and all other countries that saw fit, regardless of their labor conditions, to enter our markets on the same terms as any other nation with which we sought a business-like reciprocal trade agreement.

Whatever it means, the Peace Congress will have no easy task in solving these economic problems to the entire satisfaction of the world.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Lastly, we come to the League of Nations, the dream of the ages, —a dream that its vast army of intelligent and well-meaning advocates declare and believe is soon and certain to be realized;—realized as one of its great advocates declared, because Jesus Christ, the Saviour of Man, dreamed of it; because David, the sweet singer of Israel, dreamed of it; because George Washington, the father of our nation, dreamed of it; because the poet Tennyson dreamed of it; because Robert E. Lee dreamed of it, and because millions of mothers in the broken homes of the world are dreaming of it today; and finally, because the spirits of 10,000,000 dead men, who but yesterday fell victims to the folly and criminal shortsightedness of man, are whispering their supplications into the ears of a just God that national butchery shall end and war shall be no more.

And that is why, with the burning spirit of crusaders, the advocates of the League of Nations believe in their cause.

That, my friends, is why their zeal is entitled to the respect of all, including the equally great body of well informed people who realize that until humanity is itself stripped of its selfishness, until nations are divested of their ambitions and all the prejudices of race, class and creed and clime have disappeared from the earth, a binding League of Nations, possessing power to institute and perpetuate the peace of the world, will continue for centuries to come, as it has for centuries in the past, a mere vision—a companion of the stars, beyond the reach of man.

The advocates of the League declare that as nations are as civilized as the people who compose them, there is no more justification for their adhering to War to adjust their disputes than for men themselves to repudiate Courts and go back to the brutal process of the "wager of battle" which prevailed among the tribes of former days.

That, as a matter of fact, the frightful destruction of life and property involved should make it even a greater inducement for nations to submit their disputes to an international tribunal than the ordinary private losses involved would induce individuals to invoke the aid of the Courts of law.

That if a League were formed compelling nations before actually shedding blood, in any justiciable cause, to submit the question to arbitration, and any nation shall refuse, the scorn of mankind would be so strongly manifested and the moral force of the world would be so formidably asserted against it that no nation could survive its wicked disregard of international fair play.

Many of the League's advocates believe also that it is entirely practicable to create a world court (with rules written in advance by the powers creating it) with authority to decide all international questions and to enforce its decisions by ordering all the signatory nations to punish any offender by an economic boycott, thus making her at the same time a political outcast and a prisoner within her own borders, with all means of dealing or communicating with the outside

world denied her; which, of course, would probably mean commercial ruin, industrial stagnation and physical starvation.

Other League proponents go a step farther and would equip this international or supernational body with an inter-allied army and navy which it may order to attack any nation disputing its decrees.

The most distinct line of cleavage yet developed between those who differ regarding the practicability of such a League involves its right to use armed forces to render its decrees effective.

Advocates of the force theory declare such a joint military and naval force entirely practical, while the opponents irreverently designate it as a "foolish dream."

Let us dispassionately review some of the suggestions of the leaders in both groups. The last of President Wilson's fourteen points read as follows:—

"A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike."

The President, in elaborating upon this, declared:—

"My conception of a League of Nations is just this:—That it shall operate as the moral force of men throughout the world and that whenever or wherever wrong and aggression are planned or contemplated, this searchlight of conscience will be turned upon them and men everywhere will ask, 'what are the purposes that you hold in your heart against the fortunes of the world?'"

Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler says:—

"Let these nations, assembled by their representatives at Versailles, declare themselves to be a League of Nations organized for the precise purposes for which the war was fought, and with which their several peoples are entirely familiar, namely, the definition and protection of standards of international right and justice, the sanctity of international obligations, and the right of the small and less numerous peoples to be free from attack or domination by their larger and more powerful neighbors. This will be sufficient to begin with."

Mr. Talcot Williams says:—

"The League is inevitable. It exists for War. Why not for Peace? It has suffered from too much definition. It would do its chief work in preventing war by the use of military force to prevent hostilities by action without the declaration of war, avoiding disturbance to trade, to international intercourse and to credits."

Senator John Sharp Williams:—

"There are only two ways of keeping the Peace of the world. One by an Amphyctyonic Council of the civilized world which we are trying to secure; the other is by the domination by one great world power such as the Prussians and the Germans attempted and failed."

Viscount Grey:—"The Versailles conference will be the vital beginning of such a League. All that is necessary is that it should not commit suicide, but keep itself alive by recessing from time to time and maintaining a permanent organization. This is not all that is desirable, but all that is essential. A beginning that has vitality is

better than a more complete plan that has no life. One is a living thing, and the other a piece of furniture."

Lord Parmoor:—"I approve of the principle of a League of Nations and the constitution of a tribunal whose order shall be enforcible by an adequate sanction."

Lord Curzon:—"The French commission seems to have pointed out that it would be out of the question to set up an International Police—a state above all other states whose aims should be to substitute law for force in the settlement of these national disputes. In this I think we shall all concur."

The plan of Baron de Constant and Leon Bourgeois agrees with the American suggestions generally and differs with the French Commission.

Lord Parker:—"It is a very serious matter to ask great nations to agree beforehand to submit disputes of whatever nature to the arbitrament of a tribunal consisting of some two dozen or three dozen states, many of whom may be interested in casting their votes on this side or that."

The absence of French quotations is best explained by the following letter from Robert E. Olds, one of the best informed Americans in France:—

"I assume you are following closely the career of that ancient and honorable idea of a League of Nations. One gains the distinct impression that the French regard the notion as chimerical and visionary."

OUR OFFICIAL ATTITUDE

As compared with the report of the French Commissions, the American government, by the Act of Congress of August 29, 1916, declared it to be

"The policy of the United States to adjust and settle its international disputes through arbitration to the end that War may be honorably avoided, and the President is authorized and requested to invite at an appropriate time all the great governments of the world to a conference which shall be charged with the duty of formulating a plan for a Court of Arbitration, etc.; to appoint nine citizens of the United States as delegates and to expend such portion of $200,000 as may be necessary to carry this act into effect."

Mr. Wilson signed this bill but never acted upon the suggestion.

This act, you will observe, makes no reference to equipping the Court with a joint army and navy to enforce its decree.

Perhaps the most thoughtful and elaborate of all expressions on the subject are those of Lord Bryce, in which he concludes:—

"I think we may dismiss all these grandiose notions of what has been called a federation of the world and attempts to induce the great states to forego sovereignty and to submit to some superior authority and to constitute an international army. All these schemes must belong to a very distant future, and I do not think we ought to contemplate any further limitation of sovereignty. It is not to be denied that the difficulties in the way are very great. I do not think

any one can appreciate how great these perplexities are unless he confines himself to a close and long-continued study of the subject, and of the various plans that have been advanced."

Senator Knox enunciated this as a new American doctrine:—

"Can we not perceive emerging from these facts a new American doctrine?" he said. "I will state this great doctrine in these words: If a situation should arise in which any power or combination of powers should directly or indirectly menace the freedom and peace of the world, the United States would regard such a situation with grave concern as a menace to its own freedom and peace and would consult with other powers affected, with a view to concerted action to remove such menace. If this had been the avowed and understood policy of the United States before July, 1914, it is, in my judgment, very improbable that the war would have occurred. When at length the United States had perceived and had acted on this policy with mighty effect, the war had entered on its last and victorious phase."

Lord Bryce suggests the following concrete essentials of the League of Nations upon which its advocates are in accord:—

1. The prevention of war, one of the world's supreme necessities.
2. War can be obviated only by arbitration.
3. Arbitration cannot succeed without force behind it.
4. Compulsive force can be secured only by international operation.
5. Every member of such a League must agree to accept arbitration.
6. The League shall defend any of its members who may be attacked by any other State refusing to support arbitration.
7. The League will require:—

(a) A tribunal to arbitrate justiciable controversies.

(b) A council of conciliation to inquire into and apply mediation to non-justiciable controversies.

(c) A conference to amend, regulate and codify international laws; and

(d) An executive authority to decide on the time and methods of compelling states to submit to arbitration.

8. Enforcement may be either by economic pressure or armed force, or both.

The points upon which they do not agree are as follows:—

1. What principle shall control the admission of States to the League?
2. Shall members, great and small, have equal powers?
3. How shall the Judges or arbitrators in the Council of Conciliation be chosen?
4. Shall the executive authority consist of persons representing the Nations who are its members, or how otherwise?
5. Shall the Council have power to act, when it sees danger, without being requested by a disputant State?
6. Shall the League have a standing army and navy?

7. Shall its decisions require a unanimous vote or merely a majority of the governments represented?
8. Shall the League have power merely to force nations to arbitrate their differences, or shall it also have power to force them to abide by the arbitration decree?
9. How are military and naval armaments to be reduced?
10. Can members of the League conduct secret diplomacy?
11. Can members of the League have separate treaties among themselves?
12. May members of the League have different tariff or reciprocity agreements with each other?

Senator Lodge has recalled another serious question as to whether or not there shall be any race exclusion or discrimination.

To this formidable array of obstacles the thoughtful American is compelled to ask by what constitutional authority any Department or Officer of this Government can confer upon any international or supernational body, beyond the control of the United States, the right to enforce its decree against the United States, to attack any other power, or even to attack the United States itself, in order to enforce the decree of such foreign independent body? Can the United States, by any arrangement, afford to place its great instrumentalities of power in the hands of any foreign body which it does not itself control, with the authority upon the part of such a foreign body to use American arms against nations with whom we have no direct disputes or grievance?

Can the power to declare war, which is vested in the American Congress alone, be delegated to an alien body in which we might possibly have a single representative? Would it be constitutional? Would it be prudent?

As a great many of the world's serious disturbances and injustices involve disputes between peoples and their own governments, is the League of Nations to have any power to intervene between citizens and their own governments, between subject and sovereign, and thus control the internal affairs of other nations under the guise of averting civil war and preserving the world's peace? If so, are the army and navy of the United States to be used for that purpose without affirmative action by our Government?

WILL IT REDUCE ARMAMENTS?

But one of the most practical of all questions is whether the formation of the proposed League is to do away, to any extent, with armies and navies, and is the great tax burden of militarism to be lifted from the people who are today groaning under the load already imposed?

The most surprising answer to this is found in the proceedings of our own Congress within the past few months when Secretary Daniels, before the Naval Committee, made the startling declaration that the present proposed expenditure of $600,000,000, as a consequence of which the United States in 1925 would have the greatest

navy in the world, even outstripping England, was necessary in connection with the formation of the proposed League of Nations.

Secretary Daniels amazed the Committee when he said:—"You can do nothing in the world which would so strengthen this Country's position at the Peace Conference as to authorize this enlarged naval program." The following is also the New York Times report of his testimony before the same committee:—

"Secretary Daniels and the Naval officials desire to have a navy which will be as large as that of any other country, not only for our own purposes but for policing the world in case a League of Nations to enforce Peace is created at the Versailles conference."

Admiral Badger, before the same committee, declared Navies must be the principal support of the League of Nations, and the United States will be called upon to contribute a very large share of the International police force to render the League effective. The Admiral was supporting the $600,000,000 dollar program.

For these reasons it is well for those who are ardently urging a League on the theory of lightening the world's burdens to bear in mind that its creation is to be followed in our own case by the largest naval expenditure of any nation in the history of mankind.

In view of the foregoing list of problems to be solved, and the obstacles to be surmounted by the men at Versailles, reasonable and thoughtful citizens of this Republic will understand why our former Secretary of State and present Senator—Mr. Knox—suggested by resolution that the immediate settlement of the immediate problems of the war should first be disposed of in order that the people of all nations might resume a more normal, placid and impartial state of mind, and in order too that when that judicial atmosphere is established the world might take up and consider the wider, and more fundamental problems involved in the establishment of a League of Nations to avert discord and perpetuate the world's peace.

In conclusion, let us ask, whatever may be the present and future motives and ambitions of other nations, have the people of the United States not established in a greater degree than any other, their devotion to the spirit of fair play and their freedom from many of the local and petty prejudices and selfish aspirations that still linger about other nations? If this be true, why not continue to build up and intensify our people's love for those ideals and the love and respect of other peoples for our country? Why sacrifice her strength or surrender her sovereignty in the least degree by binding her to abide by others' votes where her vital interests may be at stake, or dragging her into European conflicts from which she should keep aloof?

Why not keep in mind that in spite of all their unselfishness and sacrifices for mankind the Italians crimsoned the snows among the clouds with their blood primarily because of their love for Italy; that the British fell in millions before Hindenberg's armies primarily because of their love of England; that the Blue Devils wrote the most heroic stories of sacrifices of the war in their own blood at Verdun because of their love and devotion to France, and that every soldier

of this Republic who died in the St. Michel salient, and fell face downward in his own blood in the Argonne Forest, died not only for mankind but because he loved the land of Washington and Lincoln and a hundred million free people—and thus it will ever continue to be; men will be willing to live and die for their Country, their kinsmen and their homes, but will the day ever dawn when their devotion to their country can be literally wiped out or transferred to some distant, independent conglomeration of nations of which they are only an incidental part?

I believe that out of this war and through this conference will come the realization of no Utopian dream, but there will emerge a clearer conception of the duty of nations to avoid future military conflicts.

The great nations already brought into sentimental and substantial alliance will realize the advantage of continued concord, and as long as reason reigns in that great realm alone, the world will be reasonably fireproof against international incendiarism.

Let us approach the solution of these problems as we would a sanctuary, and if ever God's holy light revealed to man his duty, let it reveal it now when the Peace of tomorrow depends so much upon the prudence of today.

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